



Stoffer Inspections'

Insight

Insight from the Area's Leader in Home Inspections

Stoffer
Inspections, L.C.



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PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

Throughout The Home

The best maintenance is preventive maintenance. The following tips will keep problems to a minimum and increase the overall appearance and value of a home.

Foundation-Basement Crawl Spaces

- ❑ Check around the house, generally close to the ground, for damage to wood or wood-boring insect infestation. In the basement and crawl spaces, examine the inside surfaces of the foundation walls and floor framing for wood-boring insect damage or water penetration.
- ❑ Check for cracks in foundation walls that allow water entry into the basement or crawl space. Settlement of the soil around the foundation is usually the cause. Keep grades sloped away from the house.
- ❑ Check all interior and exterior drains. Keep drains clean and open.

Exterior Walls and Surfaces

- ❑ Check masonry walls for cracks or loose, crumbling mortar joints. Since masonry is a brittle material, it's susceptible to damage from freezing. Water that penetrates the cracks or joints and then expands when frozen ruptures the toughest materials. Allow for proper sealing.
- ❑ Check all siding and trim for damage (cracking and splitting), decay, and tightness of fit. Damaged materials should be repaired or replaced and the condition that caused the problem corrected. Loose nails (caused by normal expansion and contraction) should be reset. Additional nails or screws may be needed.
- ❑ All painted surfaces should be inspected for peeling deterioration or



normal wear. Sometimes peeling paint can be caused by condensation. Paint life will vary with the method of application (brush, spray, etc.) and the exposure of the surface to the elements. To avoid paint scraping and removal, repaint before the paint peels, cracks, or blisters.

- ❑ Caulking should be checked at all joints. Loose caulk will permit water to enter. Decay or ice damage may result. Also, air leaks through these joints will lead to heat and energy losses.
- ❑ Check the roof surfaces for loose, damaged, or missing shingles. Check between the tabs on asphalt shingles, as granules wear off here first and cause leaks. Older slate and tile roofs should be inspected and maintained regularly by a professional roofer. In most cases, the nails that hold the slates fail before the slates.
- ❑ Trim trees and shrubs away from the house or roof.

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Appliance Consideration

The following list provides the estimated average life expectancy of different appliances:

Central air-conditioners, heat pumps, and dishwashers	12 years
Water heaters and clothes washers	13 years
Room air-conditioners	15 years
Refrigerators, and refrigerator-freezers	19 years
Freezers	21 years
Furnaces	23 years

By selecting an energy-efficient appliance your savings can be significant over the lifetime of the product, especially if fuel prices continue to rise as expected.

Obtain the purchase price from retail price tags on appliance models being considered, and obtain yearly operating cost from EnergyGuide labels.

You may use the average operating cost shown in large numbers on the label.



To be most accurate, however, you should use your local energy rates. You can use the table on the label to convert your local energy rate to estimate your annual operating cost. Contact your local utility or check your bills to find your local rate.

Home On The Web

Here are some helpful guides for helping your clients move.



➔ Moving Mail Guide

www.moversguide.usps.com

➔ Moving Pets Guide

www.2c.com/wb_hrpages/hr_gen_moving.html

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Interior Walls and Surfaces

- ❑ **Inspect ceilings for signs of leakage**, especially under a bath or powder room. Also check for bulges that could be caused by a leak or age.
- ❑ **Check painted, stained, or natural-finish surfaces** for coating failure and damage. Repairing and recoating (paint, varnish, etc.) when necessary can eliminate major preparation and painting at a later date.
- ❑ **Check flooring materials** for signs of excessive wear, particularly where one material meets another (for example, wood to carpet, carpet to tile). All such areas should be protected. Floors should also be checked for squeaking, poor finish, and settling. Minor problems should be addressed before they become serious ones.

Attics

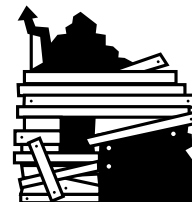
- ❑ **Attic ventilation is necessary** if moderate to above-average quantities of insulation are present. Ventilation and insulation are more of a concern in colder climates. The best ventilation is high-low because of the natural thermal currents that are present.



- ❑ **Check the condition of the insulation.** Trapped moisture will cause it to lose effectiveness. Insulation should “envelope” the living space. It should not be installed between the rafters of an attic that is not being used as a living space. When rafters are part of the living space, ventilation must be provided between the insulation and the roof sheathing.
- ❑ **Check the underside of the roof sheathing** for water stains or dampness. These problems indicate one or more of the following: (a) Leaks from the roof, flashings, or valleys; (b) Condensation caused by inadequate ventilation and/or excessive moisture inside.

BATTLING Eyesores

We've all seen the properties that are neighborhood eyesores. They bring down the value of adjoining homes and make your listings harder to sell, which is probably no news to you. If the good-guy approach does not work to motivate a neighbor helpclean up, here are some tips on what else can be done:



- 1. Get The Camera.** Taking pictures of a neighbor's junk and weeds, that sometime disappear when an agency's inspector comes to visit, presents the proper picture of the property.
- 2. Keep Good Records.** Record specific examples of occurrences. For instance, stating that fifteen trucks were parked in front of the house on July 6th is more powerful than “there are always trucks parked out there”.
- 3. Be Aggressive.** Call every official you can in the township. The squeaky wheel gets oiled first!
- 4. Neighborly Approach.** Get the neighbors involved with the complaining. It will help out everyone!

This newsletter contains basic information on the home and general topics of interest. Due to the variations in homes, individual recommendations require a comprehensive evaluation. To reprint any article in this newsletter, please contact our office. © 1996-2004. All rights reserved. (ISMA04)

Stoffer Inspections, L.C. Information

Dave Stoffer provides inspections and is able to explain them to all clients on the most common terms. Stoffer Inspections, L.C. provides 3-D computer generated narrative reports that are both quick and comprehensive. My service also provides digital photography services for complete record keeping. Each Home Inspection includes an evaluation of roofing, electrical, heating and a/c, built in appliances that stay with the home, plumbing and visual structure. Radon screening and septic system inspections are available.

Dave is a certified member of the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) #11750, a charter member and former board member of the Great Plains Chapter of ASHI, and a member of the Pro ASHI Chapter. To obtain certification, members must perform a minimum of 250 home inspections and pass a series of written tests that cover both mechanical and structural aspects of a home. Once certified, members must maintain at least 20 hours of continuing education each year. All of these requirements ensure that your clients will receive a thorough, experienced, ethical and knowledgeable home inspection.



Certified Member of the American Society of Home Inspectors

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Meet Your Home
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